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**WAR
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No 38
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DESERT PATROL



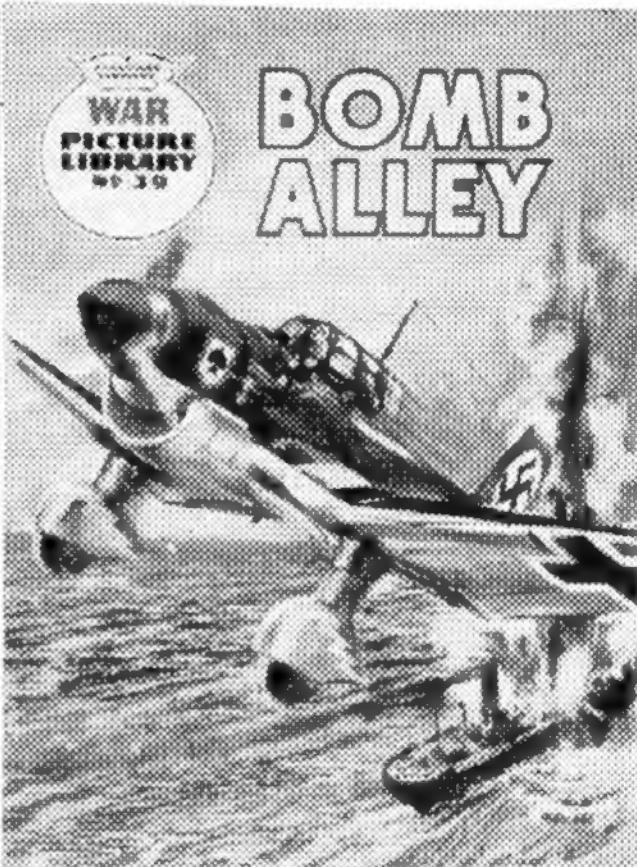
**ALSO ON SALE NOW
FOR WAR THRILLS... ACTION... DRAMA...**

WAR PICTURE LIBRARY

No. 36—LONE COMMANDO



No.—39 BOMB ALLEY



The raid on the Norwegian coast met almost complete annihilation as the Germans poured death and destruction on the Commando invaders. Who had betrayed those brave men? That was the question Captain Mike Fairweather meant to answer.

The enemy-infested skies rained a torrent of high explosives upon the gallant little ships as they fought through to beleaguered Cos with vital men and munitions. Not a man flinched throughout that ordeal whether he sailed in warship or tramp steamer.

ALSO ON SALE NOW :—No. 37—FIRE ONE

Next month's **FOUR** thrilling **WAR PICTURE LIBRARY** titles on sale March 7th are :—

No. 40—PATHFINDER
No. 41—RED CROSS OF COURAGE

No. 42—PHANTOM FORCE FIVE
No. 43—THREE . . . TWO . . . ONE . . . ZERO !

DESERT PATROL

BY 1942, THE TOUGH BRITISH EIGHTH ARMY HAD ADVANCED AND RETREATED TWICE ACROSS THE BLAZING WASTES OF THE WESTERN DESERT. WEARY NOW, SHORT OF FOOD AND AMMUNITION, THEY HELD THE GAZALA LINE WEST OF TOBRUK. IN MAY, FIELD MARSHAL ROMMEL, THE DESERT FOX, STRUCK AGAIN...



Chapter 1. THE STUBBORN COLONEL

THE POWERFUL TANKS OF THE AFRIKA KORPS SMASHED Gaping Holes in the Ragged British Lines. Now it was Bayonets against Guns and Bare Hands against Heavy Armour.



Desert Patrol

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OUTFLANKED AND OUTGUNNED, THE EIGHTH ARMY FELL BACK TOWARDS THE ALAMEIN LINE, LEAVING MANY PRISONERS BEHIND. BUT HERE AND THERE, ISOLATED GROUPS OF DESPERATE MEN HELD ON . . .



ONE GROUP, A HANDFUL OF MEN LED BY A COLONEL, DUG THEMSELVES IN ON A SHALLOW RIDGE OUTSIDE TOBRUK. ORDERS FROM HEADQUARTERS HAD SENT THEM THERE TO HOLD THE EXTREME WING OF THE BRITISH LINE.



Desert Patrol

NOW THEY WERE ALONE AND OUT OF TOUCH. THE ENEMY WERE CLOSING IN. BUT THE COLONEL HAD RECEIVED HIS ORDERS AND WITH RIGID DISCIPLINE HE WOULD CARRY THEM OUT...



YET EVEN AS THE COLONEL SPOKE, A PAIR OF POWERFUL FIELD GLASSES WERE TRAINED ON HIM FROM THE BROODING DESERT.



Desert Patrol

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THE L.R.D.G. WAS FEARED WITH GOOD REASON BY THE GERMANS. IN FAST, HEAVILY ARMED TRUCKS, THEIR TOUGH PATROLS PENETRATED DEEP INTO THE DESERT AND HARRIED THE AFRIKA KORPS FAR BEHIND THE FRONT LINE. SWIFTLY AND SAVAGELY THEY WOULD STRIKE, AND THEN SLIP BACK LIKE GHOSTS INTO THE WASTES OF SAND.



THEIR POWERFUL ENGINES ROARING,
THE SIX TRUCKS RACED ALONG THE
RIDGE TOWARDS THE LONELY
GROUP OF BRITISH SOLDIERS...



Desert Patrol



Desert Patrol

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BILL MACDONALD'S VOICE WAS LAZY AND SARCASTIC, BUT HIS WORDS WERE DEADLY SERIOUS...

HAVE YOU ORDERS FOR ME FROM HEADQUARTERS, CAPTAIN?

NOT ORDERS, COLONEL, JUST GOOD ADVICE! THE JERRIES HAVE OUTFLANKED YOU! TOBRUK HAS FALLEN AND THE EIGHTH ARMY'S MOVING BACK TO MATRUH! PULL YOUR MEN OUT WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME.



THE COLONEL LISTENED UNMOVINGLY. HE HAD BEEN CUT OFF BY THE SWIFT GERMAN ADVANCE, BUT HIS DUTY WAS CLEAR...

MY LAST ORDERS WERE TO HOLD THIS RIDGE, CAPTAIN! I AM A SOLDIER! I SHALL DO MY DUTY!



WITH A GRIM SHRUG OF HIS SHOULDERS, BILL MACDONALD TURNED BACK TO HIS TRUCK. HE HAD DONE ALL HE COULD...

I'D LIKE TO STAY FOR THE PARTY, COLONEL, BUT I'VE GOT ORDERS AS WELL! GOOD LUCK!

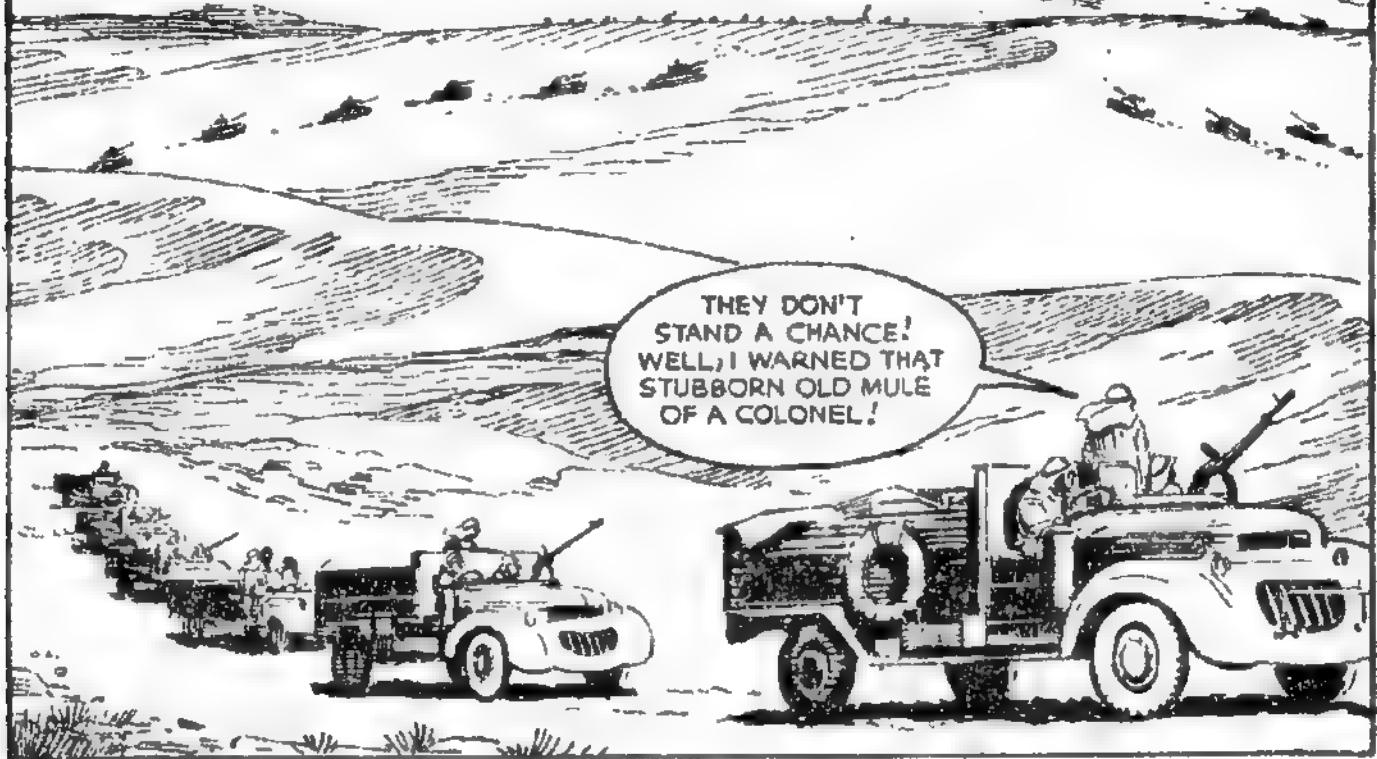


Desert Patrol



Desert Patrol

FAR AWAY ACROSS THE DESERT, A SCORE OF GERMAN TANKS
WERE CLOSING IN LIKE DEADLY BLACK SCORPIONS
ON THE TINY GROUP OF BRITISH SOLDIERS...



HARD-EYED, BILL MACDONALD SAW THE FIRST
SHELLBURSTS HIT THE FOXHOLES ON
THE RIDGE. HIS VOICE WAS BITTER...



Desert Patrol

SOON THE VICIOUS SOUNDS OF THAT ONE-SIDED BATTLE HAD DIED AWAY IN THE DISTANCE. ALL THAT DAY, THE SIX TRUCKS HEADED WESTWARD INTO THE HEART OF ENEMY TERRITORY. AS NIGHT FELL...

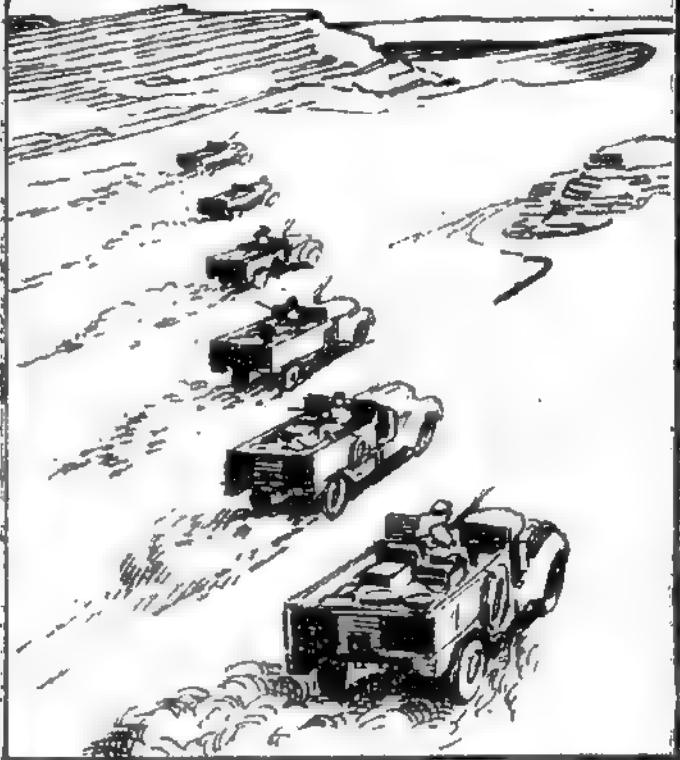


FAR BEHIND THE ENEMY LINES, THE DESERT PATROL SETTLED DOWN FOR THE NIGHT IN A PATCH OF THORN SCRUB...



LIEUTENANT SAM HARPER, THE PATROL'S SECOND-IN-COMMAND, KNEW FROM THE BITTERNESS IN HIS LEADER'S VOICE THAT HE, TOO, WAS THINKING OF THE TRAGEDY THEY HAD WITNESSED THAT DAY. BUT THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK NOW... AND AT FIRST LIGHT OF MORNING...

THEIR DESTINATION LAY WEST OF BENGHAZI, FIVE HUNDRED MILES BEHIND THE GERMAN LINES! FOR THREE DAYS THE TRUCKS PLOUGHED ON ACROSS THE DESERT WASTES. AT ALL COSTS THEY HAD TO KEEP MOVING...



ONCE A TRUCK LOST MOMENTUM, THE SOFT SAND CLOGGED THE WHEELS AND THE VEHICLE WAS BOGGED DOWN. THE OTHER TRUCKS DARED NOT STOP TO HELP.



Desert Patrol



Desert Patrol

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BUT AHEAD, ON THE EDGE OF THE SAND RIDGE, THE PATROL HAD HALTED AT AN EXULTANT SHOUT FROM THE LOOK-OUT IN THE LEADING TRUCK...



FAR BELOW IN A CHOKING CLOUD OF DUST, A GERMAN CONVOY WAS BUMPING TOWARDS TRIPOLI. THE GUARDS LOLLED LAZILY... THEY WERE FOUR HUNDRED MILES INSIDE THEIR OWN TERRITORY, WHAT HAD THEY TO FEAR IN THIS EMPTY DESERT?



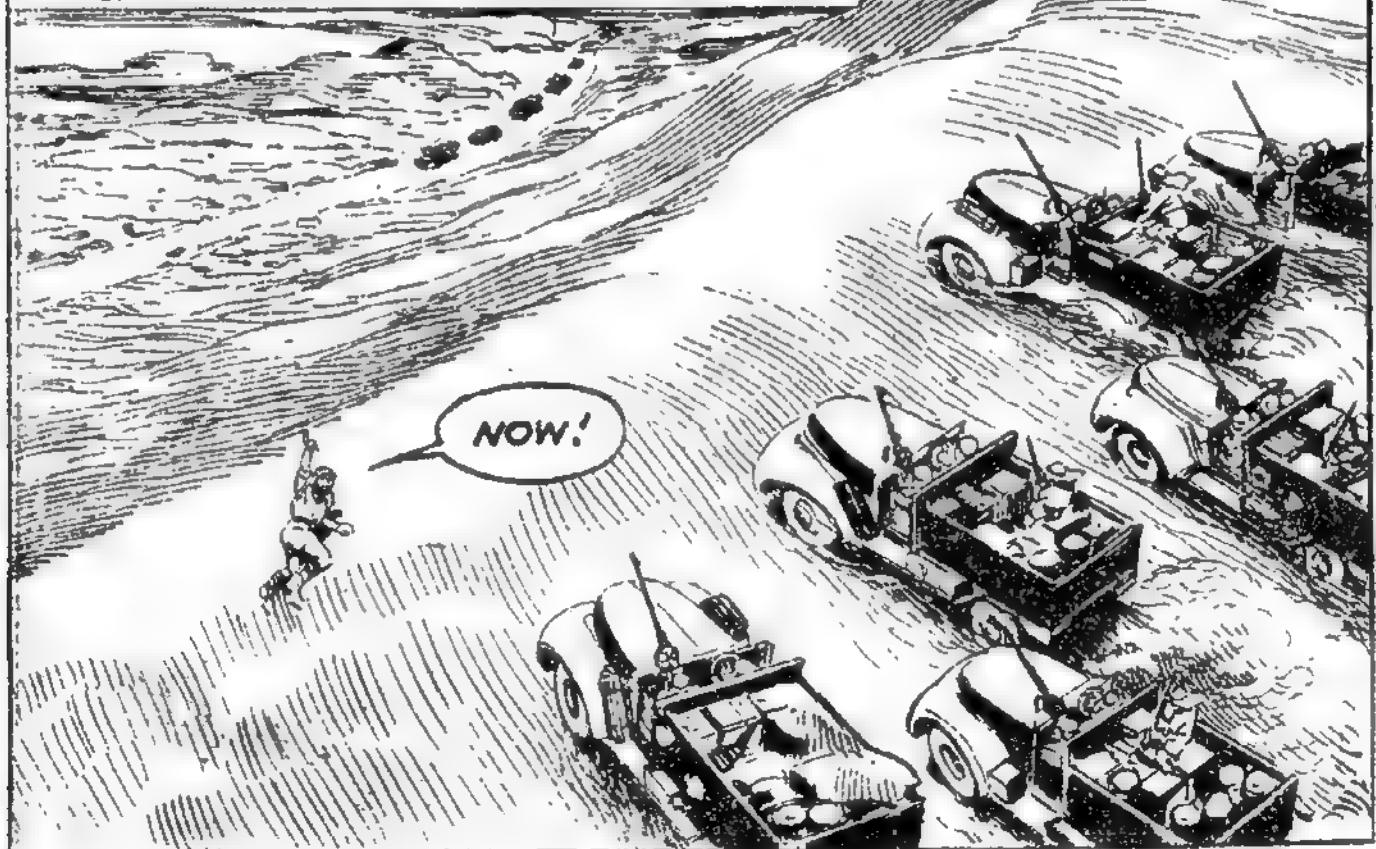
Desert Patrol

BUT THE DESERT WAS NOT EMPTY! KEEN EYES WERE WATCHING THEM FROM ABOVE; A STEEL HARD VOICE WAS GIVING THE ORDER TO PREPARE FOR ATTACK!

RIGHT, MEN! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO! START ROLLING WHEN I GIVE THE SIGNAL!



MAC WAITED UNTIL THE GERMAN LORRIES WERE NEARLY ACREAST OF HIS POSITION. THEN HE DROPPED HIS ARM... AND THE SHATTERING ROAR OF THE SIX MOTORS BLASTED THE DESERT SILENCE!



THE TRUCKS SURGED TOWARDS THE RIDGE WITH SLAMMING GEARS ...



FAR BELOW, A GERMAN SOLDIER YAWNED COMFORTABLY AND GLANCED AT THE SANDY SLOPE. WHAT WERE THOSE SIX SPECKS HIGHER UP, HE WONDERED LAZILY... THEY WERE MOVING... SUDDENLY HE WAS BELLOWING!



Desert Patrol

THE HEADLONG RUSH OF THE VICIOUSLY ARMED L.R.D.G. PATROL CAUGHT THE GERMANS OFF THEIR GUARD! THEY WERE STILL GROPING FRANTICALLY FOR THEIR WEAPONS WHEN...



A HAIL OF BULLETS SMASHED INTO THE LURCHING LORRIES! THE GERMANS FIRED WILDLY AT THE PHANTOM TRUCKS WHICH SPAT DEATH AT THEM FROM THE DESERT...





LIKE MARAUDING RED INDIANS, THE DESERT PATROL SWEPT AROUND THE GERMAN COLUMN AND POURED FIRE INTO IT FROM TWO SIDES!



Desert Patrol

CROUCHED OVER HIS CHATTERING MACHINE GUN IN THE LEADING TRUCK, SERGEANT SMITH SAW AN ODD FIGURE IN THE GERMAN STAFF CAR....

LOOK AT THAT GEEZER, MAC!
DOESN'T HE KNOW THERE'S A WAR ON?

DON'T FIRE AT HIM, SMITHY...
THAT'S NOT A JERRY UNIFORM HE'S WEARING!



IN TEN TERRIBLE MINUTES THE GERMAN CONVOY HAD BEEN SHATTERED AND THE BLAZING GUNS OF PATROL ONE FELL SILENT...



CEASE FIRE!

CAPTAIN BILL MACDONALD HEADED CURIOUSLY FOR THE STAFF CAR AND THE MAN WHO HAD SAT UNFLINCHING IN IT THROUGHOUT THE BATTLE...



JEEPERS... COLONEL HARRIS!

SO IT'S
THE RUDE
YOUNG CAPTAIN!
CONGRATULATIONS!
ON A WELL-FOUGHT
ACTION!

Desert Patrol

THE STIFF, SOLDIERLY FIGURE WAS SOILED AND BLOODSTAINED, BUT THE VOICE WAS AS STERN AS EVER...



THOUGH THE MEN OF THE L.R.D.G. DESPISED CONVENTION, THEY COULD RESPECT COURAGE!

PHEW, HE'S A STIFF-NECKED OLD SON OF A GUN... BUT HE'S GOT GUTS!

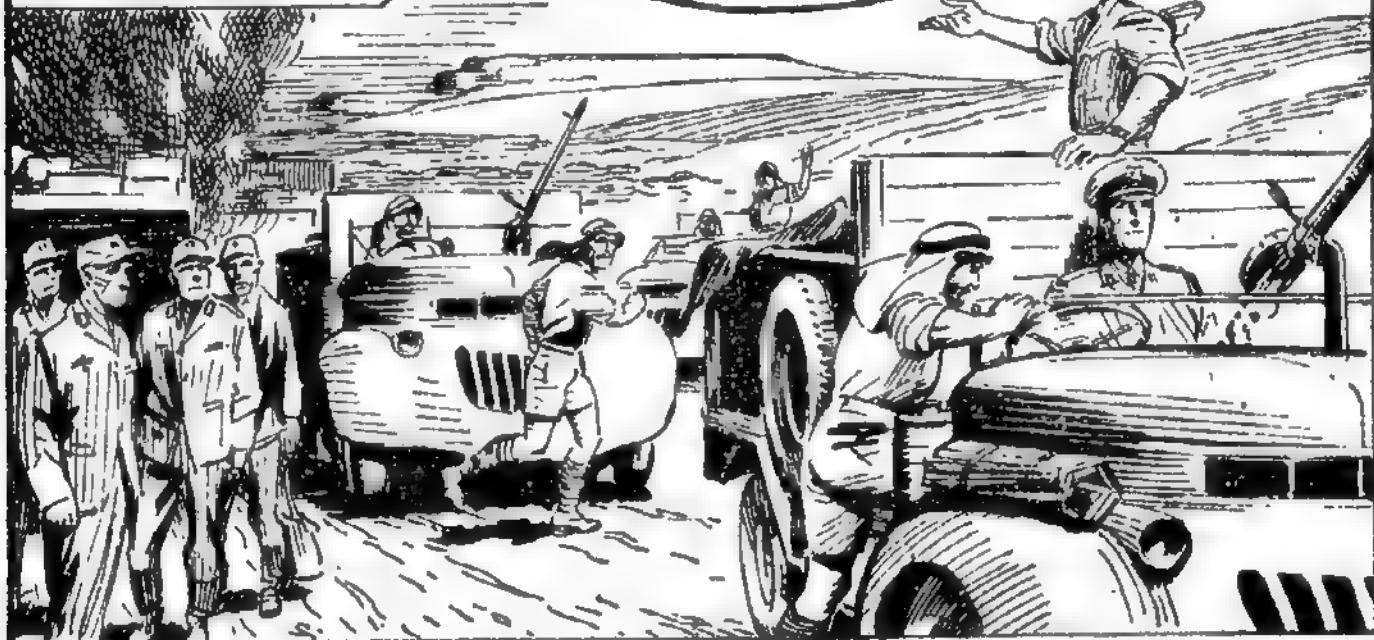


Chapter 2.

MARBLE ARCH

NOW THE VICIOUS LITTLE ACTION WAS OVER...AND THE TOUGH DESERT PATROL PREPARED TO MOVE ON ...

THESE JERRIES WILL HAVE TO WALK! WE CAN'T TAKE PRISONERS! GET ROLLING, MEN!



SITTING IN BILL MACDONALD'S TRUCK, THE STERN OLD COLONEL BEGAN TO TALK...

THEY WERE TAKING ME BACK TO TRIPOLI FOR SHIPMENT TO A PRISONER-OF-WAR CAGE IN ITALY! THANK YOU, CAPTAIN, I'M GLAD OF THIS CHANCE TO GO ON FIGHTING!

I'M GLAD TOO, COLONEL! I'D GIVEN YOU UP FOR DEAD FOUR DAYS AGO AT TOBRUK!



Desert Patrol



PATROL QI STILL HAD ITS MISSION TO CARRY OUT. THE SIX STURDY TRUCKS ROLLED ON DEEPER INTO THE DESERT.



Desert Patrol

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AT NIGHTFALL, THE PATROL
LEAGUERED DOWN IN
THE OPEN DESERT . . .

COME OVER
TO THE FIRE,
COLONEL, AND I'LL TELL
YOU ABOUT OUR
PLANS !



WE'RE HEADING FOR MARBLE ARCH! IT'S
A POINT ON THE MAIN JERRY SUPPLY ROAD
TWO HUNDRED MILES WEST OF BENGHAZI! THERE'S
A HIDEOUT THERE WHERE L.R.D.G. PATROLS
KEEP A CONSTANT WATCH ON JERRY TROOP
MOVEMENTS AND RADIO REPORTS
BACK TO CAIRO !



Desert Patrol



WHEN THE COLONEL JOINED BILL MACDONALD IN THE TRUCK LATER, HIS FACE WAS CLEAN-SHAVEN... AND FROSTY!

I DON'T WANT TO MAKE TROUBLE, CAPTAIN, BUT FOR THE SAKE OF DISCIPLINE I OUGHT TO REPORT THAT ONE OF YOUR MEN WAS INSOLENT TO ME THIS MORNING!

OH YES,
THAT WAS SMITHY,
COLONEL! HE TOLD
ME ABOUT IT!

MAC KNEW THAT THE UNCONVENTIONAL WAYS OF THE L.R.D.G. MUST SEEM ODD TO THE STERN OLD SOLDIER! BUT HE MEANT TO KEEP THE PEACE...

I OUGHT TO EXPLAIN, COLONEL, THAT WE DON'T SHAVE ON PATROL BECAUSE OUR WATER RATION PER DAY IS FOUR PINTS PER MAN!

I SEE, CAPTAIN! SERGEANT SMITH SHOULD HAVE EXPLAINED HIMSELF! HOWEVER, I TAKE IT YOU HAVE NO OBJECTION IF I KEEP MYSELF CLEAN WITH MY RATION OF WATER, RATHER THAN DRINK IT?

THE COLONEL, IT WAS OBVIOUS, THOROUGHLY DISAPPROVED OF THE LONG RANGE DESERT PATROL.

NO OBJECTION AT ALL, COLONEL! BUT YOU MAY CHANGE YOUR MIND WHEN YOU'VE LIVED IN THE DESERT FOR SIX WEEKS!

I SHALL NOT CHANGE MY MIND, CAPTAIN! IT IS A SOLDIER'S DUTY TO KEEP HIMSELF CLEAN!

Desert Patrol

FOR THREE MORE SEARING DAYS UNDER THE DESERT SUN, QI PATROL HEADED WESTWARDS. THEN . . .

WE'RE APPROACHING MARBLE ARCH, MEN! NO TALKING FROM NOW ON!



MARBLE ARCH WAS JUST A HEAP OF BARREN ROCKS IN THE DESERT. FROM HERE, THE INTREPID PATROLS OF THE L.R.D.G. KEPT CONSTANT WATCH ON THE UNSUSPECTING ENEMY SIX HUNDRED MILES BEHIND THE FRONT LINE!"



THE PATROL HAD REACHED THEIR DESTINATION AT LAST...

OKAY, SIMON, WE'LL TAKE OVER NOW! ANY EXCITEMENT?

DULL AS DITCHWATER, MAC! THERE ARE PLENTY OF JERRIES HEADING FOR THE FRONT, THOUGH! MAYBE WE'LL BE ABLE TO PRANG A FEW ON OUR WAY BACK... I NEED A BIT OF ACTION!

THE MEN'S VOICES WERE CASUAL AND EASY... YET IN THIS PLACE, DEATH WAS NEVER MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED YARDS AWAY...

SO LONG, SIMON! GIVE MY LOVE TO CAIRO!

CHEERIO, MAC! KEEP OUT OF MISCHIEF!

Desert Patrol



DEEP IN THE HEART OF THE ROCKY BLUFF,
A CAVE HAD BEEN HOLLOWED OUT
AND ROUGHLY FURNISHED. AT ONE
END, THROUGH A NARROW SLIT,
THE FIERCE SUNLIGHT PROBED...

THIS IS IT, COLONEL! THE JERRIES ARE
JUST OVER A QUARTER OF A MILE AWAY
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT ROCK!



AND BEYOND THAT NARROW SLIT, SO NEAR THAT THEIR VOICES COULD BE HEARD BY THE HIDDEN WATCHERS, PASSED THE UNSUSPECTING GERMAN AFRIKA KORPS...



COLONEL HARRIS WATCHED THE ENEMY FOR A LONG TIME. WHEN HE SPOKE, HIS VOICE WAS PUZZLED AND UNEASY...



Chapter 3.

NO DISCIPLINE

IN THE DAYS WHICH FOLLOWED, THE COLONEL FRETTED. THE EASY WAYS OF THE DESERT PATROL RUBBED ON HIS RIGID MILITARY NERVES!

CAPTAIN,
THIS IS JUST NOT
GOOD ENOUGH! THESE
MEN ARE LYING ABOUT,
PLAYING CARDS. IT'S...
IT'S UNMILITARY!

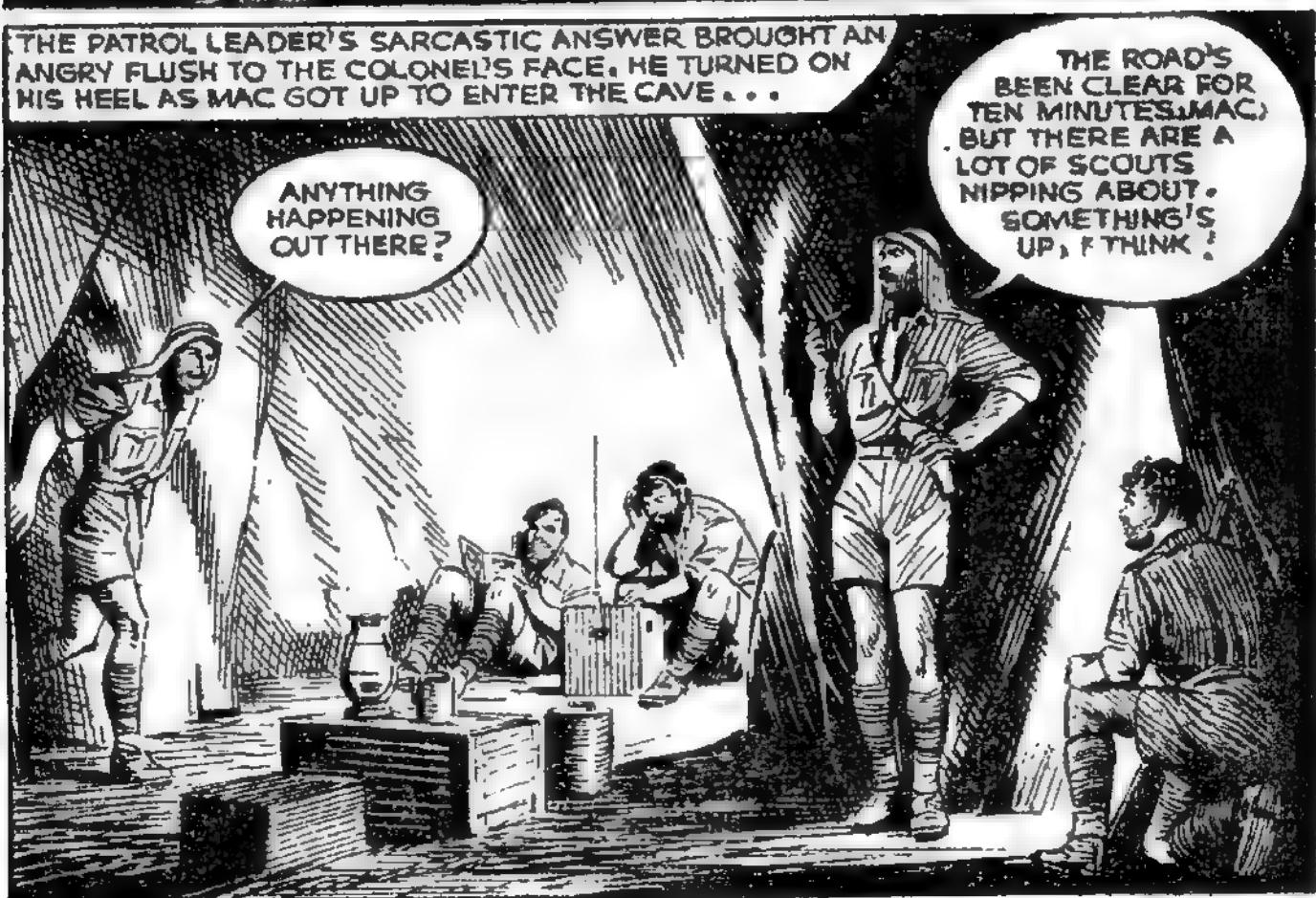
WHAT DO
YOU SUGGEST
THEY DO, COLONEL?
POLISH THE TRUCKS
... SO THE JERRIES
CAN SEE THEM
GLEAMING FROM
THE AIR!



THE PATROL LEADER'S SARCASTIC ANSWER BROUGHT AN ANGRY FLUSH TO THE COLONEL'S FACE. HE TURNED ON HIS HEEL AS MAC GOT UP TO ENTER THE CAVE . . .

ANYTHING
HAPPENING
OUT THERE?

THE ROAD'S
BEEN CLEAR FOR
TEN MINUTES, MAC,
BUT THERE ARE A
LOT OF SCOUTS
NIPPING ABOUT.
SOMETHING'S
UP, I THINK!



Desert Patrol

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LIEUTENANT HARPER WAS ON WATCH... AND SOMETHING WAS PUZZLING HIM. MAC HAD JOINED HIM AT THE PEEPLOYEE WHEN AN URGENT VOICE CALLED HIM ...



CURSWING THE OBSTINATE OLD SOLDIER UNDER HIS BREATH, BILL MACDONALD FOLLOWED THE CORPORAL.



Desert Patrol



OUTSIDE IN THE HARSH DESERT
GLARE, AN ASTONISHING SIGHT
MET BILL MACDONALD'S EYES!
BUT AT THAT MOMENT...



SHARP EYES IN ONE OF THE GERMAN FIGHTERS HAD SEEN THE COLONEL'S ERECT FIGURE BELOW! BUT BY THE TIME THE ENEMY PATROL HAD TURNED...



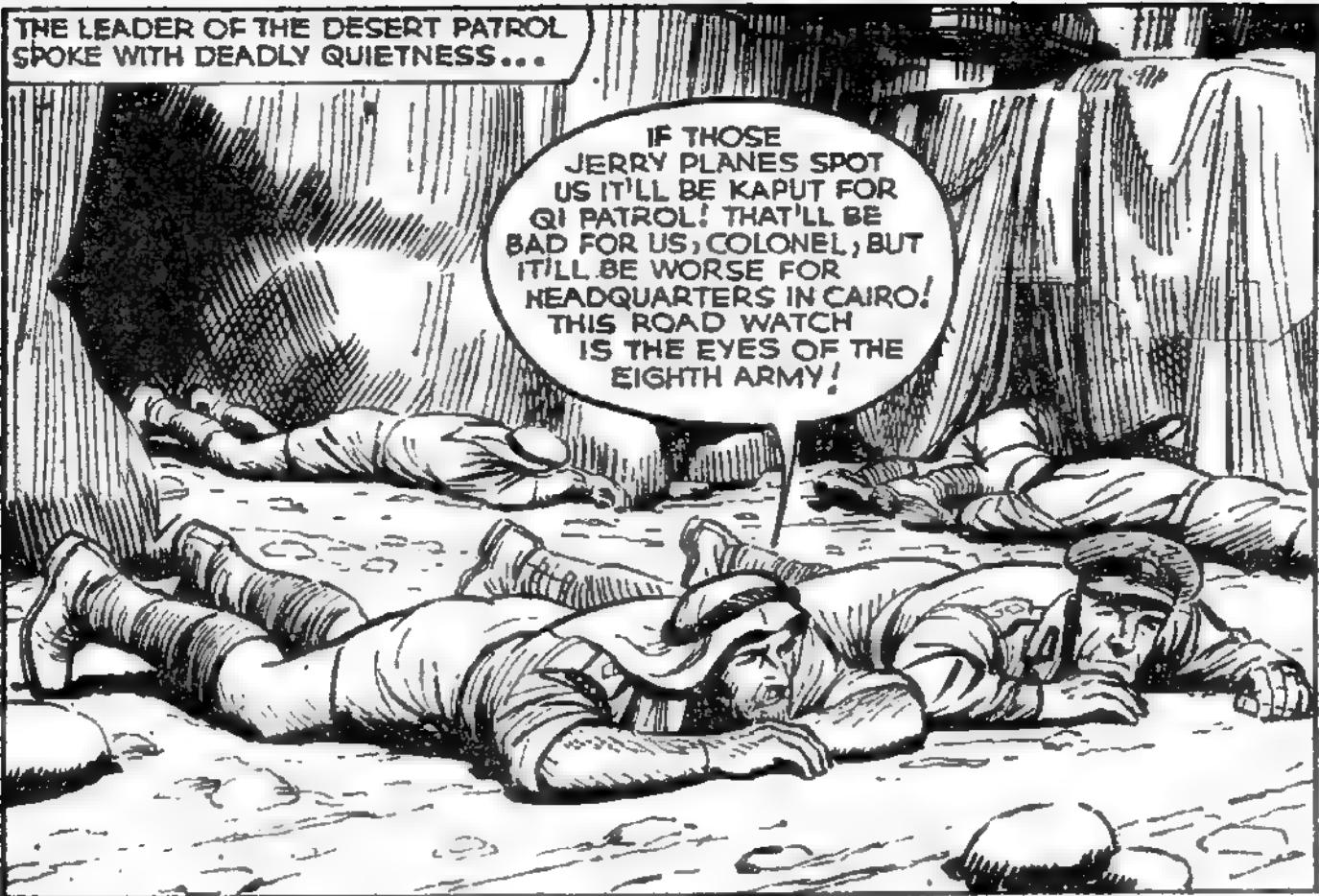
BEIZERHUNS!
I THOUGHT I SAW
A MAN STANDING
DOWN THERE, BUT
IT MUST HAVE
BEEN A ROCK!

THE MESSERSCHMITTS WHINED AWAY IN A CLIMBING TURN, LYING IN THE DUST, THE ANGRY COLONEL WAS PEREMPTORILY SILENCED BY A GRIM CAPTAIN MACDONALD!

CAPTAIN,
WHAT THE DEVIL...

KEEP DOWN!

Desert Patrol



MAC'S VOICE HAD AN UNFAMILIAR RASP OF AUTHORITY IN IT...



BUT THE COLONEL'S DETESTATION OF THE IRREGULAR WAYS OF THE DESERT PATROL HAD BEEN GROWING FOR DAYS...

YOUR MEN ARE A DISGRACE TO THE ARMY, CAPTAIN! THEY'RE DIRTY AND SLACK! THEY'RE NOT SOLDIERS; THEY'RE RUFFIANS! WHAT THEY NEED IS A GOOD DRILLING!



IT WAS A BITTER CLASH BETWEEN THE RIGID CONVENTIONAL SOLDIER AND THE TOUGH DESERT FIGHTER OF AN ALL-OUT MODERN WAR...

YOU'VE SEEN MY MEN FIGHTING, COLONEL! THAT'S WHAT THEY JOINED THE L.R.D.G. TO DO... TO FIGHT THE HEAT AND THE SAND AND THE GERMANS! THEY LIVE HARD, AND THEY FIGHT HARD, AND OFTEN THEY DIE! AND THEY LEAVE THE NICE CLEAN UNIFORMS TO THE DESK WALLAHS IN CAIRO!

MAC! HEY, MAC!



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Desert Patrol

A SHOUT FROM LIEUTENANT HARPER INTERRUPTED THE TWO ANGRY MEN. SOMETHING WAS HAPPENING ON THE GERMAN SUPPLY ROAD...

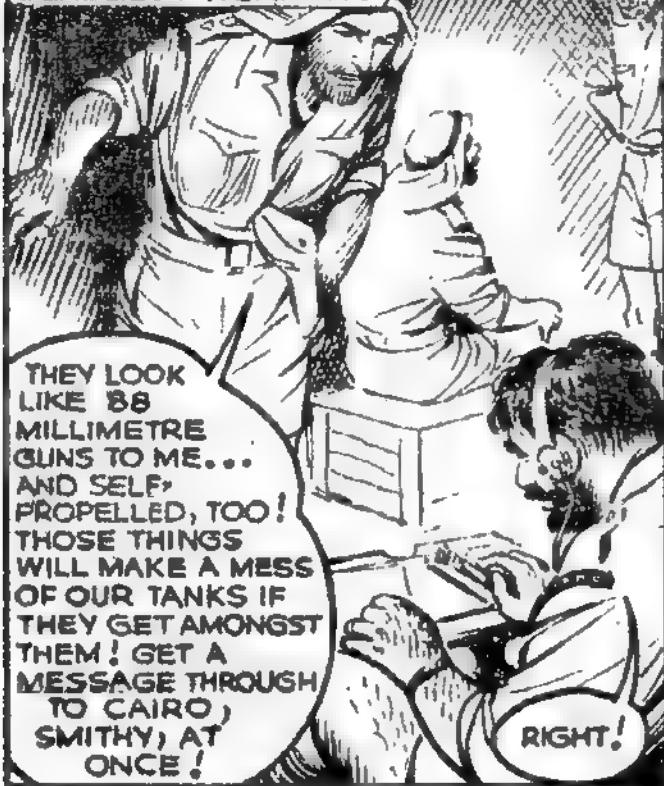
TAKE A LOOK AT THAT ROAD...



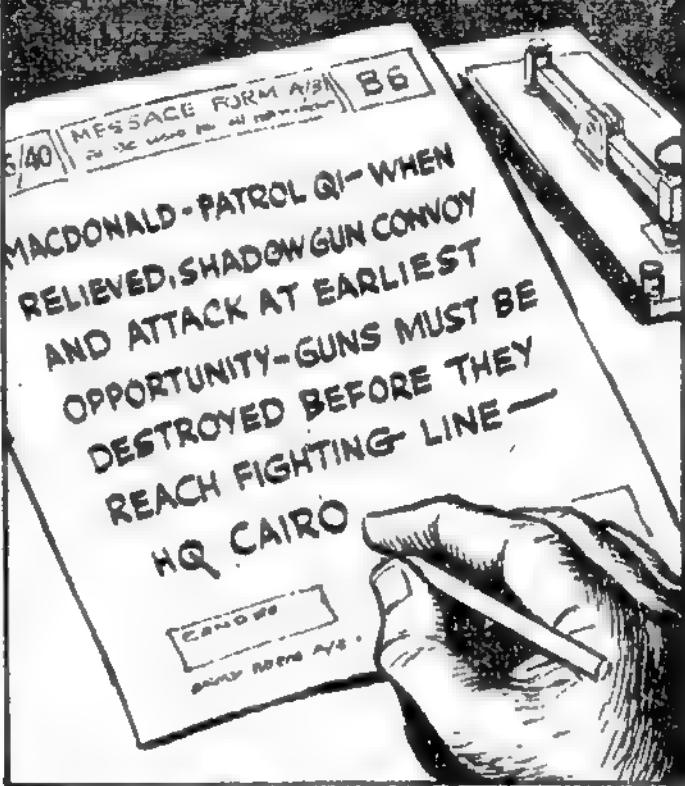
BILL MACDONALD PEERED CAUTIOUSLY THROUGH THE NARROW SLIT. HE GAVE A GASP OF SURPRISE!



THE GUNS LUMBERING PAST FIVE HUNDRED YARDS AWAY, THEIR WICKED BARRELS CAMOUFLAGED, WERE THE AFRIKA KORPS' NEWEST AND DEADLIEST WEAPON!



THE MORSE KEY RATTLED... WITHIN AN HOUR, A MESSAGE HAD COME BACK FROM HEADQUARTERS. IT WAS TERSE... AND IT PROMISED VIOLENT ACTION!



NEXT DAY, A RELIEF FOR PATROL QI APPEARED AT MARBLE ARCH. BILL MACDONALD AND HIS MEN WERE READY . . .



Chapter 4.

LIGHTNING RAID

ONCE AGAIN, THE DESERT MARAUDERS
WERE ON THE PROWL...

PUT YOUR
FOOT DOWN, SMITHY!
WE MUSTN'T LOSE
THAT CONVOY!



FOR TWO DAYS AND NIGHTS,
PATROL QI SHADOWED THE
GERMAN CONVOY. ON THE
THIRD DAY, MAC SHOOK
HIS HEAD GRIMLY...

THE
CONVOY'S TOO
WELL-GUARDED...
WE'D NEVER GET NEAR
THE GUNS IF WE
ATTACKED ON THE
ROAD!



Desert Patrol

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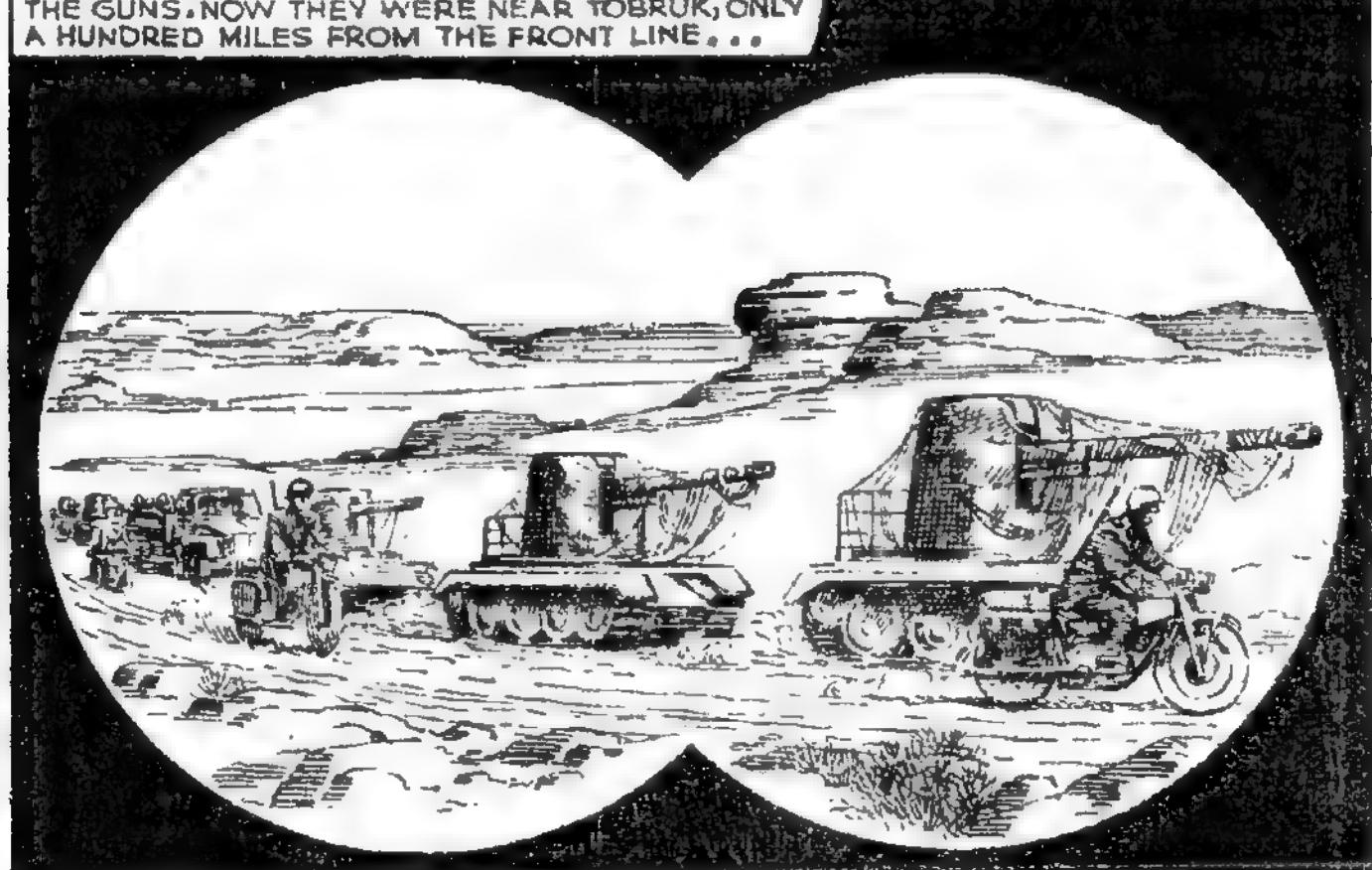
FINGERS ITCHING ON THEIR GUNS, THE DESERT PATROL FOLLOWED THE GERMAN CONVOY ACROSS THE BLAZING DESERT.

WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO, CAPTAIN?

WAIT UNTIL THE GUNS REACH THE BASE CAMP! THE JERRIES WILL HAVE TO CALIBRATE THEM BEFORE THEY TAKE THEM UP TO THE FRONT; AND THEY MAY RELAX THEIR GUARD ONCE THEY'RE BEHIND BARBED WIRE!



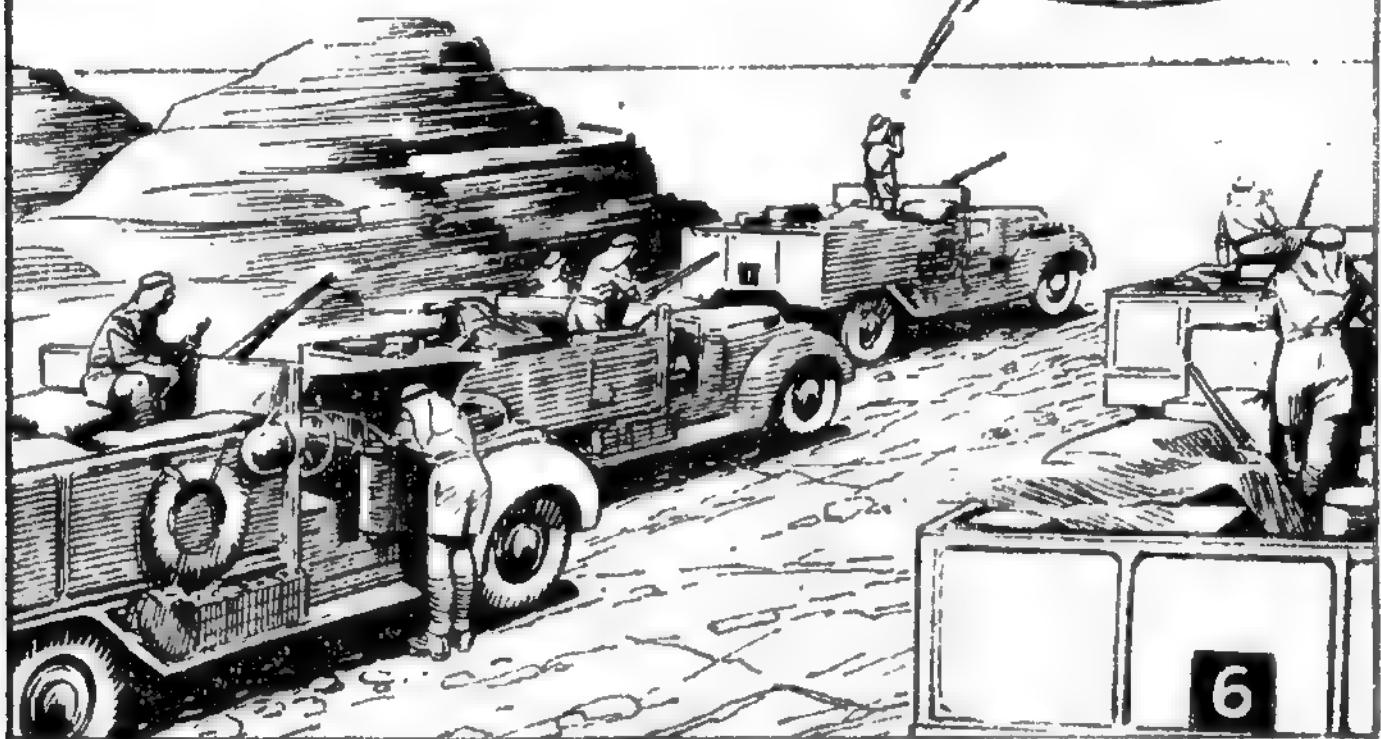
FOR SIX MORE DAYS, THE PATROL SHADOWED THE GUNS. NOW THEY WERE NEAR TOBRUK, ONLY A HUNDRED MILES FROM THE FRONT LINE...



Desert Patrol

ON THE SEVENTH DAY, FROM FAR OUT IN THE DESERT,
THE WEARY BRITISH COMMANDOS SAW THE HUTS
AND BARBED WIRE OF THE GERMAN BASE CAMP...

NOW THE
QUESTION IS, HOW
DO WE ATTACK
THE CAMP?



THE MORE MAC THOUGHT OF A FRONTAL ATTACK WITH HIS SMALL PATROL ON THAT HEAVILY-ARMED CAMP, THE LESS ENTHUSIASTIC HE FELT ABOUT IT.

I DON'T LIKE IT! I DON'T LIKE IT AT ALL!

YOU DON'T
THINK A FRONTAL
ATTACK BY YOUR
HANDFUL OF MEN WOULD
REACH THE GUNS, EH?
CAPTAIN? MAY I
MAKE A
SUGGESTION?

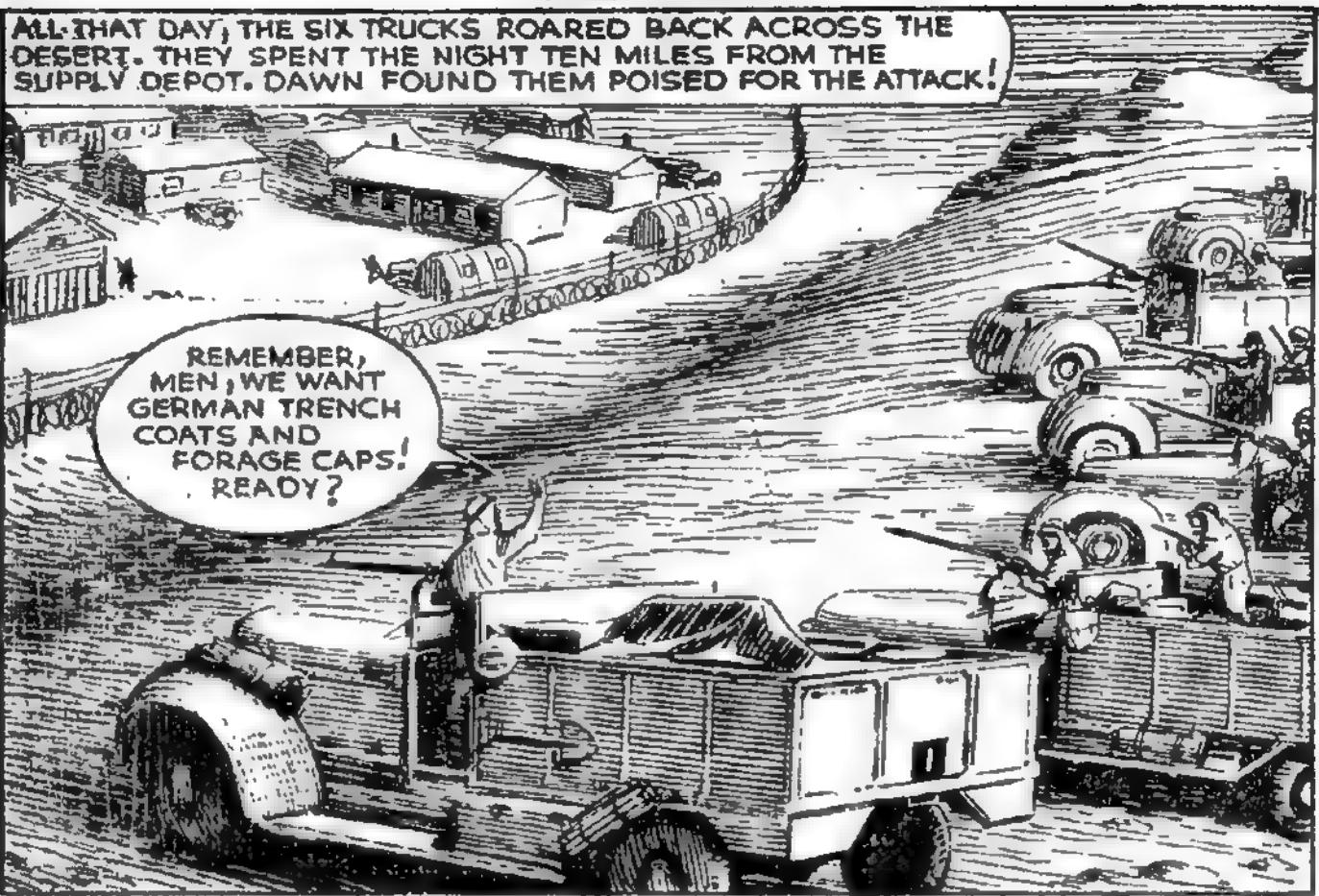


Desert Patrol

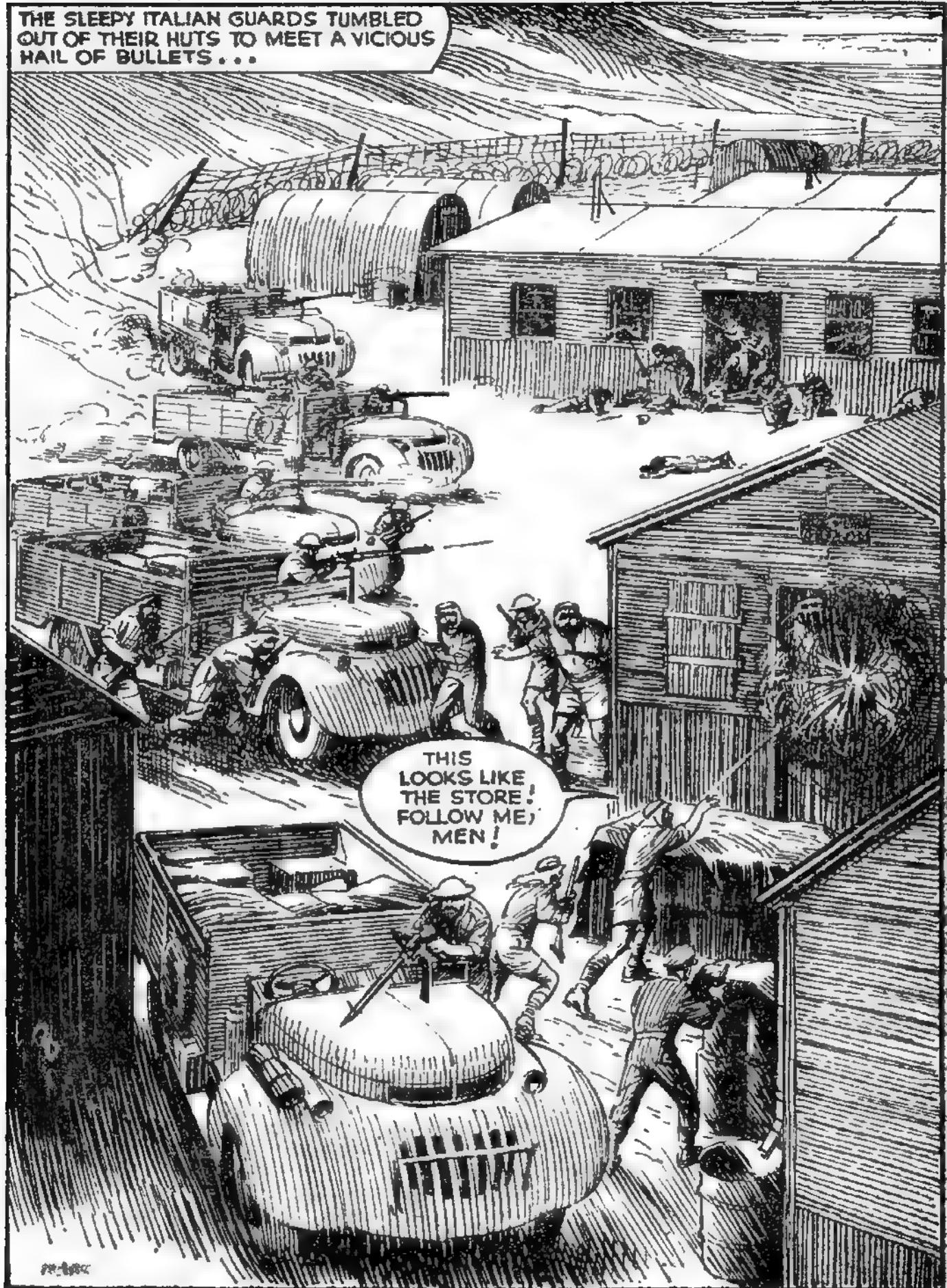
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Desert Patrol



THE SLEEPY ITALIAN GUARDS TUMBLED OUT OF THEIR HUTS TO MEET A VICIOUS HAIL OF BULLETS . . .



Desert Patrol



THE GRENADE BURST AGAINST THE DOOR OF THE HUT AND SHATTERED IT! GUN READY, MAC STEPPED COOLLY FORWARD.

LET'S
HOPE THEY FIT,
COLONEL!



IN FIVE MINUTES, THE LIGHTNING RAID WAS OVER AND THE SIX TRUCKS SWUNG ROUND FOR THE GETAWAY...



BACK INTO THE DESERT ROARED THE TRUCKS, TAKING WITH THEM A FEW BULLET HOLES, A PILE OF GERMAN ARMY GREATCOATS...AND SOME VERY PUZZLED MEN!



Desert Patrol



Desert Patrol

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IN THE ICY DARKNESS OF THE DESERT NIGHT, THE MEN UNEASILY PONDERED THEIR LEADER'S STRANGE ORDERS...

WHAT'S UP WITH THE CAPTAIN, SMITHY? I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO ATTACK THOSE JERRY GUNS, NOT START SQUARE-BASHING!

MAC'S GOT HIS REASONS, NOBBY... I HOPE!

DISGRUNTLED AND PUZZLED THE PATROL FELL IN FOR ITS FIRST DRILL IN TWO YEARS OF TOUGH DESERT FIGHTING...

YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY, MEN, HEAR THAT! ALL RIGHT, COLONEL, THE PATROL'S YOURS.

THANK YOU, CAPTAIN!

Desert Patrol

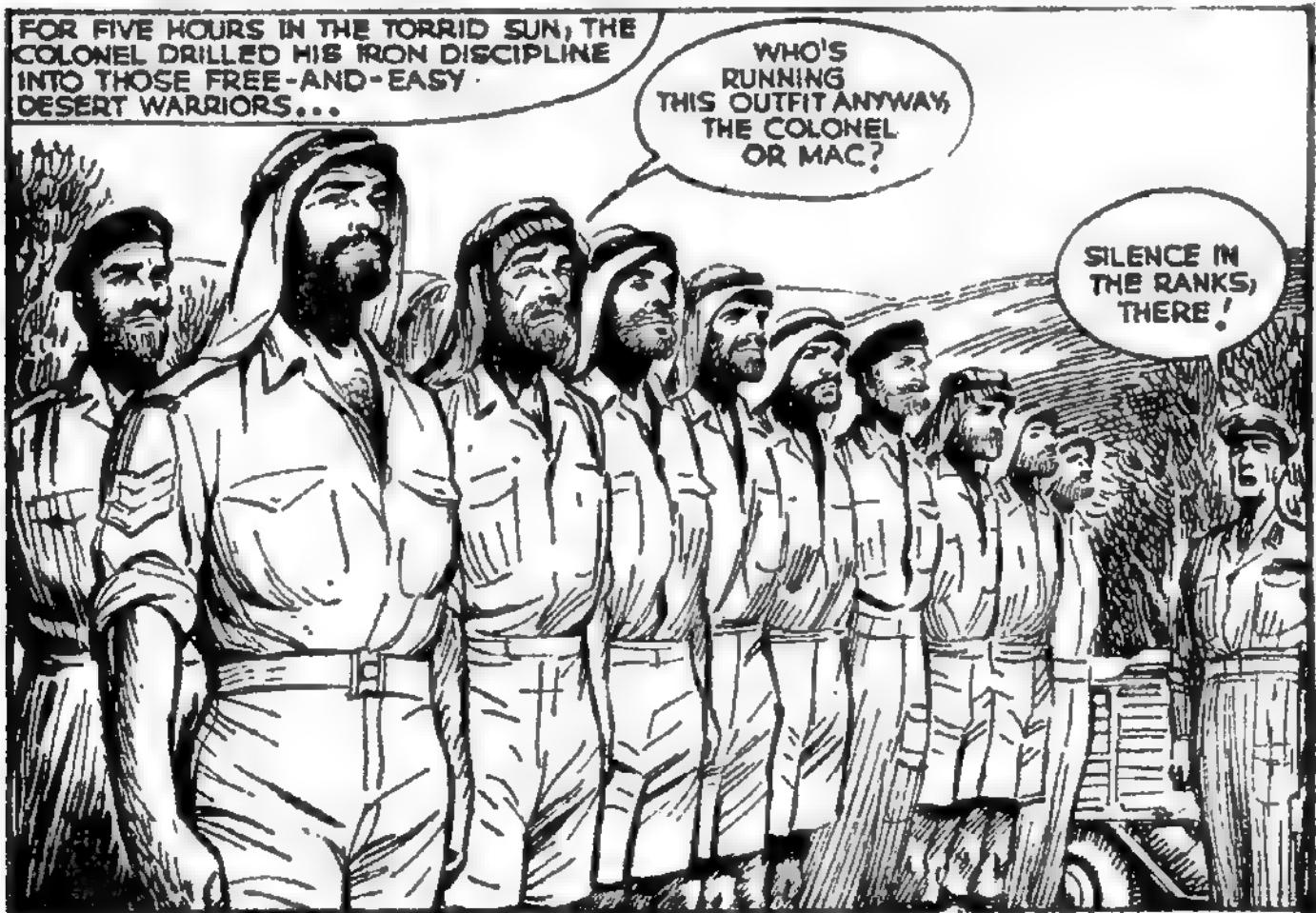
THOUGH THE MEN SCOWLED AND SWEARED, THERE WAS
NOTHING FOR IT BUT TO OBEY THE STEEL-HARD
BARK OF THE COLONEL!



FOR FIVE HOURS IN THE TORRID SUN, THE
COLONEL DRILLED HIS IRON DISCIPLINE
INTO THOSE FREE-AND-EASY
DESERT WARRIORS...

WHO'S
RUNNING
THIS OUTFIT ANYWAY,
THE COLONEL
OR MAC?

SILENCE IN
THE RANKS,
THERE!



Desert Patrol

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AT THE END, MUTINOUS AND WEARY, THE MEN HEARD THE CRUELLEST ORDER OF ALL ... FROM THEIR OWN LEADER !

DISMISSED!

RIGHT, MEN, NOW GET THOSE BEARDS OFF !



FOR PERHAPS THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE TRAGIC ACTION OUTSIDE TOBRUK, THE COLONEL PERMITTED HIMSELF A-SMILE !

YOU'LL HAVE A MUTINY ON YOUR HANDS IF YOU DON'T TELL THEM THE REASON FOR THIS SOON, CAPTAIN !

THEY'RE PROUD DEVILS, COLONEL ! THEY'VE GOT TO BE TO FIGHT IN THIS DESERT AND LIVE ! I'LL TALK TO THEM SOON .



Desert Patrol



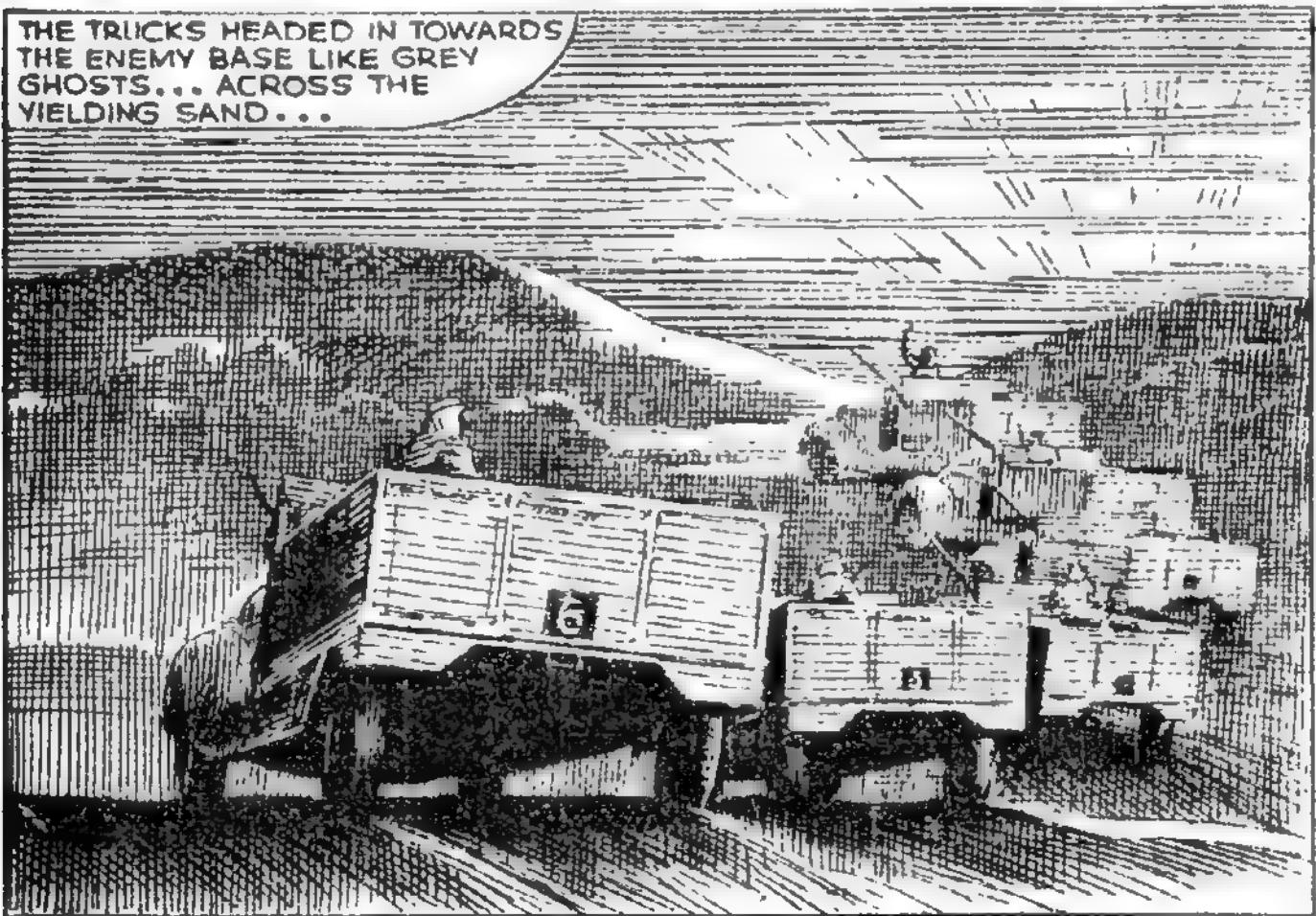
THE MEN SLEPT EASILY. THEY HAD LEARNED THE VALUE OF REST BEFORE BATTLE AND IN THE HALF-DARKNESS BEFORE THE DAWN...

WE LEAVE THE TRUCKS THREE MILES FROM THE BASE CAMP AND MARCH THE REST OF THE WAY! UNDERSTAND?

OKAY, SIR!



THE TRUCKS HEADED IN TOWARDS THE ENEMY BASE LIKE GREY GHOSTS... ACROSS THE YIELDING SAND...



Chapter 5.

UNCHALLENGED

IN THIS MOMENT BEFORE THE HAZARDOUS ATTEMPT ON THE BIG GUNS, THE MEN WERE MOMENTARILY SILENT... BUT THEIR LEADER'S VOICE WAS AS COOL AS EVER!

IF WE'RE CAUGHT WEARING THESE JERRY UNIFORMS, WE'LL BE SHOT... SO MARCH SMARTLY AND DON'T GET CAUGHT! WE'LL TAKE THE COATS OFF BEFORE WE START WORK INSIDE!



ONE LAST TASK REMAINED. THE DRIVER OF EACH TRUCK STOOPED TO THE SAND BESIDE HIS VEHICLE...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SERGEANT?

WE BURY THE DISTRIBUTOR ROTOR ARM IN THE SAND BY THE FRONT OFFSIDE WHEEL WHEN WE LEAVE THE TRUCKS IN THE DESERT, SIR! THEY'RE IMMobilIZED IF THE JERRIES FIND 'EM, BUT WE CAN START THEM AGAIN WHEN WE WANT TO!



IN THE UNEASY LIGHT,
THE MEN FORMED A
COLUMN. THE ATTACK
HAD ALMOST BEGUN...

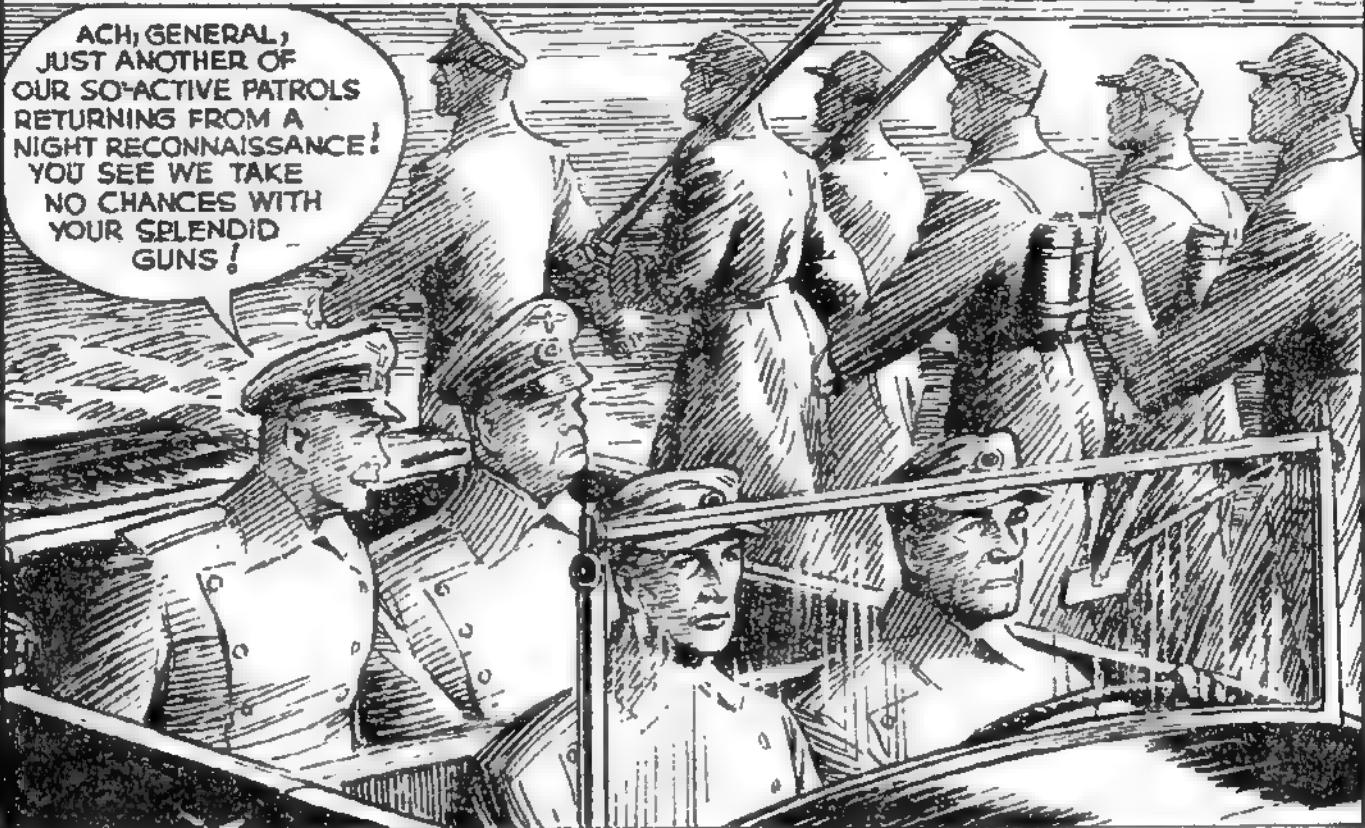


FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, THE DISGUISED
PATROL HAD REACHED THE PERIMETER ROAD
A MILE FROM THE GERMAN CAMP...



Desert Patrol

NOW THE FIRST MOMENT OF PERIL APPROACHED! A GERMAN STAFF CAR SWEEPED TOWARD THE MARCHING COLUMN! WOULD THE DAREDEVIL ATTEMPT BE UNMASKED BEFORE IT HAD BEGIN...



ALL WAS WELL! THE STAFF CAR, AND ITS COMPLACENT ENEMY OCCUPANTS, GLIDED UNSUSPECTINGLY PAST! BILL MACDONALD HEAVED A SIGH OF RELIEF ...



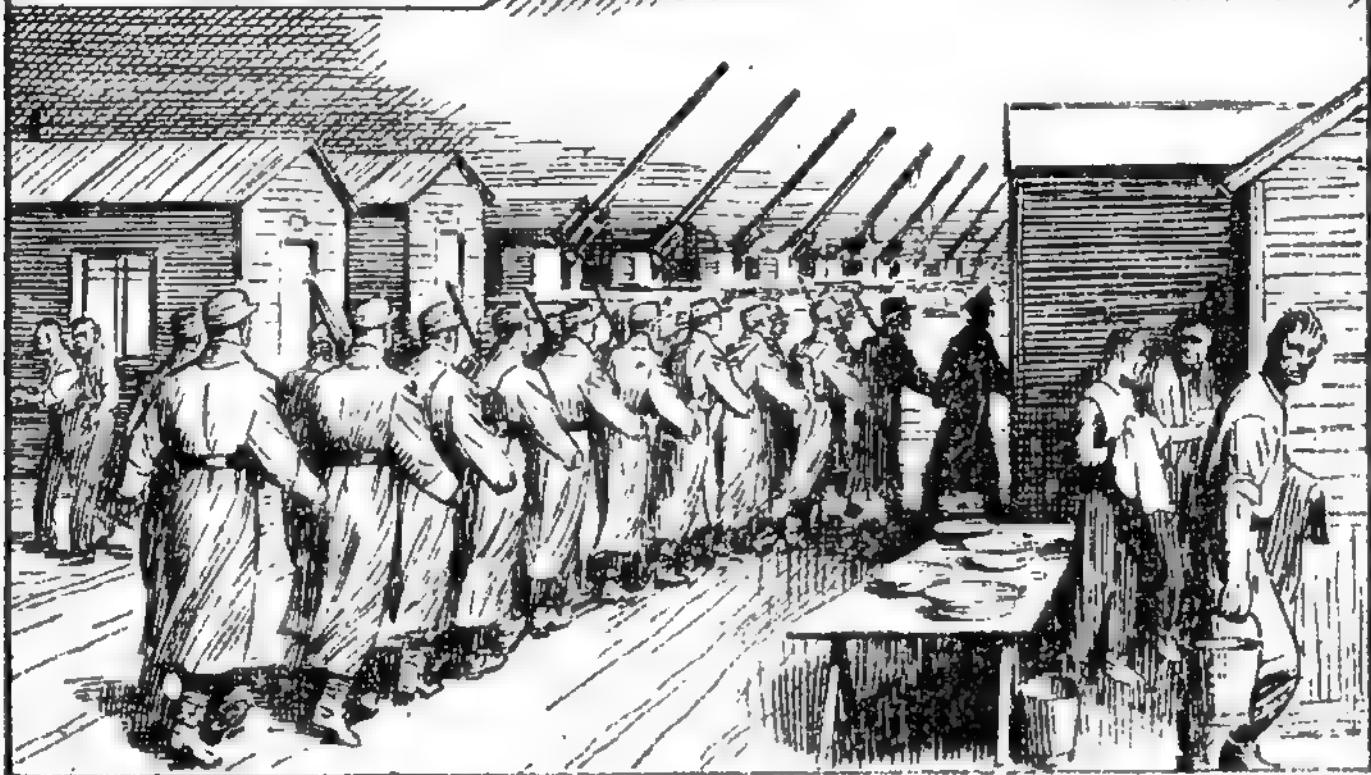
BUT THE MOST DANGEROUS TEST LAY AHEAD, AT THE BARBED WIRE PERIMETER OF THE CAMP. THERE WERE DRY MOUTHS IN THE MARCHING COLUMN . . .



THE GERMAN CORPORAL OF THE GUARD WAS SLEEPY AND IRRITABLE AFTER A BORING NIGHT OF DUTY...WHAT WAS LIKELY TO HAPPEN HERE AT THE BASE CAMP, FAR AWAY FROM THE ENEMY . . .



STILL MARCHING WITH COOL PRECISION
BEHIND THE RAMROD BACK OF THE
COLONEL, PATROL QI PASSED
UNCHALLENGED INTO THE HEART
OF THE ENEMY CAMP!



ONCE BEHIND THE BLANK WALL
OF THE HUT, A LIGHTNING
TRANSFORMATION BEGAN! THE
STOLID GERMAN SOLDIERS
BECAME TOUGH AND
DAREDEVIL BRITISH
DESERT RAIDERS . . .

GET
CRACKING, MEN!
ONE OF YOU TO EACH
GUN WITH THE CHARGES,
THE REST OF YOU
HOLD OFF THE
JERRIES!

HIMMEL!



TEN MEN LEAPED TOWARDS THE BIG GUNS, WITH THE HIGH EXPLOSIVE CHARGES! THE REST TURNED VIOLENTLY AT BAY AS THE FIRST GERMAN RIFLE CRACKED!



Desert Patrol

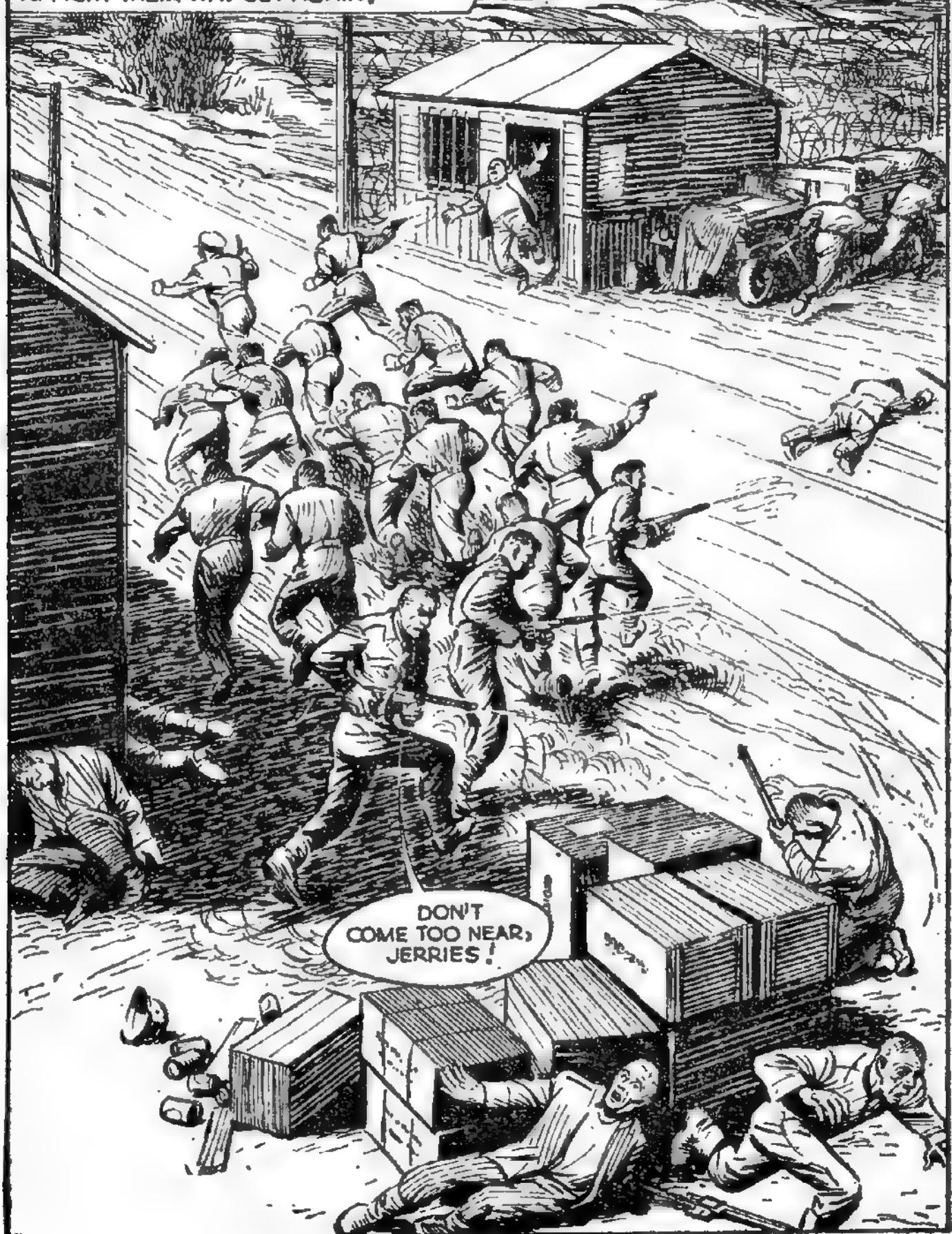
MORE GERMAN SOLDIERS CAME RUNNING UP... TO BE MET BY A FURIOUS WALL OF LEAD FROM THE MEN OF THE L.R.D.G.!



BUT ALREADY THE MAIN TASK HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT...
THE VITAL GERMAN GUNS WERE DOOMED!



NOW THE INTREPID MEN WHO HAD SLIPPED SO QUIETLY INTO THE HORNET'S NEST, HAD TO FIGHT THEIR WAY OUT AGAIN!



Desert Patrol



PANTING, THE L.R.D.G. MEN FLUNG THEMSELVES DOWN BEHIND A SANDY HILLOCK. BEHIND THEM, THE SKY WAS STAINED WITH SMOKE FROM THE WRECKED GUNS!

THEY'RE BRINGING OUT ARMOURED CARS, BUT THEY'RE HEADING THE WRONG WAY! GIVE THEM HALF A MINUTE AND THEN MAKE FOR THF TRUCKS...FAST!



HELPING THEIR WOUNDED, THE MEN OF QI PATROL MADE A LAST BREATHLESS DASH FOR SAFETY...



Desert Patrol

THE FREEDOM OF THE DESERT LAY AHEAD... THE BLAZING
WRECKAGE OF TEN VITAL GERMAN GUNS BEHIND...



AS THE TRUCKS OF THE PATROL HEADED FAST FOR THE BRITISH LINES, THE COLONEL AND THE CAPTAIN LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND GRINNED!



EACH HAD PLAYED HIS PART IN A HAZARDOUS OPERATION; EACH HAD LEARNED THROUGH THE VIOLENCE OF BATTLE TO RESPECT THE OTHER! WHEN CAIRO HAD BEEN SAFELY REACHED THEY MADE THEIR FAREWELLS.

SO LONG, COLONEL! WE MUST WORK TOGETHER AGAIN SOME TIME!



TWO MONTHS LATER, AS THE EIGHTH ARMY GATHERED ITSELF FOR THE FINAL CRUSHING DEFEAT OF ROMMEL'S AFRIKA KORPS AT EL ALAMEIN, THE TWO MEN MET AGAIN.

HALLO, COLONEL!
WE'RE ATTACHED TO
YOUR BATTALION - DID
YOU KNOW?

I ARRANGED
IT, CAPTAIN!



Desert Patrol

AS THE COLONEL PROUDLY WATCHED THE L.R.D.G. PATROL GO PAST, HIS YOUNG FELLOW-OFFICER FROWNED IN SHARP DISAPPROVAL . . .



THE COLONEL'S VOICE WAS AS STERN AS IT HAD BEEN ONCE BEFORE IN THE HIDEOUT AT MARBLE ARCH . . . BUT THE WORDS HAD CHANGED!



Printed in England by Messrs. Percy Brothers Ltd., Manchester 1, and published each month by Fleetway Publications Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Advertisement Offices: Talis House, Talis Street, London, E.C.4. Sole Agents: Australasia, Messrs. Gordon & Goteh Ltd.; South Africa, Central News Agency Ltd.; Federation of Rhodesia and Nyassaland, Messrs. Kingstons Ltd. WAR PICTURE LIBRARY is sold subject to the following conditions, that it shall not, without the written consent of the Publishers first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade except at the full retail price as shown on the cover; and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition, or in any unauthorized cover by way of Trade; or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.

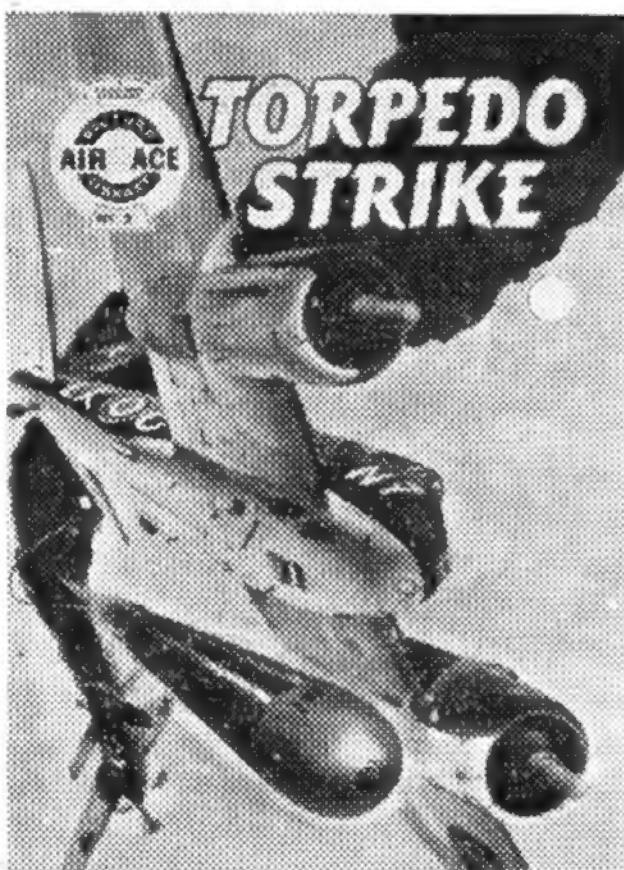
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LOOK OUT! . . . THEY'RE COMING YOUR WAY!

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